

ACTIVITIES OF INTEREST GROUPS CHAPTER 11

Ap Gov
Period 7

INFORMATION

- ⦿ Nonpolitical sources don't work, provide detailed information.
- ⦿ Work best on narrow issues
- ⦿ Officials need a way to gather information



PUBLIC SUPPORT: RISE OF NEW POLITICS



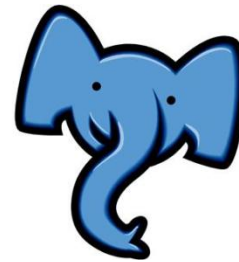
- ◎ Target the undecided
- ◎ Some groups try to embarrass other groups
- ◎ Some groups try to get grassroots support
- ◎ A few of the largest groups are all powerful

MONEY AND PAC'S

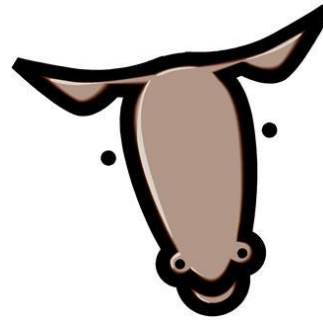


- ◎ Money is least effective way to influence politicians.
- ◎ Campaign finance reform law of 1973 had two effects.
 - Restricted amount of money interest groups can give politicians
 - Made it legal for corps. and unions to create PAC's (political action committees)

MONEY AND PAC'S



- ◎ Rapid growth in PAC's has not gotten votes
 - There's more money on both sides
 - Congress takes the money but still vote on other reasons
- ◎ Almost any organization can create a PAC
 - More than half are sponsored by corps.
 - One-third are liberal, two-thirds conservative



MONEY AND PAC'S

- ◎ Ideological PAC's raise more money but spend less of it.
- ◎ In 2000 unions and business organizations gave most.
- ◎ Incumbents get the most money
 - Business PAC's split money between Democrats and Republicans
 - Democrats get most money

MONEY AND PAC'S

- PAC contributions are small
- No evidence that money influences votes in Congress.
 - Most members vote according to beliefs
 - When it's a small issue money *may* play a role
 - PAC is most likely to influence politics
- The revolving door
 - Promise future jobs to officials
 - Few conspicuous examples of abuse



MONEY AND PAC'S



● Trouble

- Disruption always part of American politics
- Used by groups with different views
- Better accepted since 1960's
- History of proper persons using disruption: suffrage, civil rights, antiwar movements
- Officials dread no-win situations

REGULATING INTEREST GROUPS

- ◉ Protection by the First Amendment
- ◉ 1946 law accomplished little as far as registration
- ◉ 1995 lobby act enacted by Congress
 - Broadens definition of a lobbyist
 - Lobbyists must report twice annually
 - Exempts grassroots organizations
 - No enforcement organization created



REGULATING INTEREST GROUPS

- ◎ Significant restraints prior to 1995 still in effect
 - Tax code- threats of losing tax exempt status
 - Campaign finance laws

